

ROTC attachment A points-only option

By Maj. Bob Thompson

If your Troop Program Unit or Individual Mobilization Augmentation position is eliminated and you end up in the Individual Ready Reserve, one way to stay active and earn retirement points is through attachment to a local college ROTC battalion.

I've been on attachment orders at Louisiana State University Army ROTC since March 1989. You must be on orders issued by the Army Reserve Personnel Center to earn points.

Most of my duties involve preparing, conducting and/or evaluating instruction. Some of the classes I teach: officer and enlisted promotion systems, officer and NCO evaluation reports, Uniform Code of Military Justice and suicide prevention. I also conduct inspections and teach occasional classes at Junior ROTC programs supported by LSU.

Possibly my most important duty is to educate cadets and the active Army cadre about Army Reserve opportunities, our organization and missions.

To become attached ...

First, coordinate with the local university or college ROTC battalion. Generally an interview with the Professor of Military Science (PMS) is required.

Once the ROTC unit agrees to attachment, a DA Form 4651R (*Request for Assignment or Attachment Orders*) must be completed, signed by the PMS, and submitted to the soldier's personnel management team at ARPERCEN.

The personnel center verifies the soldier has a valid physical, proper security clearance, and meets height/weight standards.

Orders usually are issued with an effective day 30 days after ARPERCEN receives the request.

CAUTION: Duty performed before the effective date of the attachment orders does not generate retirement points.

Many active duty soldiers know very little about the USAR.

My ROTC classes are during the day, but some ROTC programs do have night

classes. You also can help with leadership labs and field exercises.

As a "no cost" asset to the ROTC battalion, you can negotiate your work schedule to a degree. I meet with the Professor of Military Science (PMS) at the beginning of each semester, then inform my civilian employer of my ROTC duties in a written memorandum. While working for LSU I use a combination of military leave and vacation time, about 25 days per year.

A real plum to attachment is that I receive an annual OER. My rater is the PMS, a lieutenant colonel, my senior rater the Cadet Command brigade commander, a colonel. OERs give promotion boards something to look at, and can be hard to come by in the IRR.

I earn two retirement points for each full day of ROTC duty (one point for each four hours; maximum of two points per day). I document my points on a DA Form 1380, signed by the PMS, which I send to ARPERCEN at the end of each semester. I usually earn about 40 retirement points per year via ROTC.

USAR Foreign Exchange Program

One week he's responsible for U.S. Army Corps of Engineers construction projects in the Houston Ship Canal. The next Maj. Mike Morris is in Europe watching a German army live fire exercise.

That metamorphosis was made possible by the Army Reserve's Foreign Exchange Program. Each year the USAR sends 40-50 soldiers, plus one unit, to England or Germany for 17-day active duty tours.

Morris, a chemical team leader in the 75th Division (Exercise), spent two weeks last September with the 320th Engineer Battalion in Lahnstein.

During his tour Morris observed basic training (each battalion trains its own conscripts) and went on a two-night field exercise. For a battle study, he piloted (right) a light tactical raft down the Rhine River to the Remagen Bridge, a WWII tactical landmark. In his free time Morris visited Heidelberg.



Application packets for the FY 98 exchange program are due to the U.S. Army Reserve Command by Dec. 31, 1997. Major commands will receive program guidance later this year. Point of contact is Mr. Gene Hinkle, (404) 629-8750.

